

From the Director

December 2020

Alternate Assessment Assurance and Justification Survey Due December 18

The Results Driven Accountability (RDA) Planning Tool was sent to corporations on Friday, November 13. Within this tool, each corporation will find a page with their 1 percent calculation for the 2019-2020 school year. This calculation was based on identification data rather than participation data due to the cancellation of the Spring 2020 administration of I AM. Only those corporations over the 1 percent should complete the [Alternate Assessment Assurance and Justification Survey](#) by December 18. This data is needed as a part of Indiana's 1 Percent Waiver Extension Request which will be submitted to USED by January 5, 2021. Questions regarding this survey should be communicated to Stephanie Thompson and Sarah Mohr.

Secondary Transition Office Hours

The Office of Special Education continues to offer Secondary Transition Office Hours to answer questions about Transition IEPs, Transition Portfolios, and other secondary transition questions. Beginning again in January through April, office hours will be from 3-5p.m. ET on select Tuesdays and Thursdays. Please [sign up](#) to receive a link to the office hours session you'd like to participate in!

Updates from the Office of Assessment

High School

ILEARN Biology ECA Paper and Online Test Windows Now Open

Students completing the high school biology course this month should participate in the ILEARN Biology ECA during the current window. Review participation guidance outlined in this [one-page resource](#) sent to CTCs for more details. The window for students testing paper-and-pencil (e.g., regular, large print, braille, Spanish) closes Thursday, December 10. Schools must transcribe responses for students using large print or braille test materials before shipping test materials to the scoring vendor. Directions for transcribing student responses is located in the [ILEARN Test Coordinator's Manual \(TCM\)](#). The window for students testing online is open through Thursday, December 17. Please contact the [Indiana Assessment Help Desk](#) with any questions.

ISTEP+ Online Testing Ends December 11

The ISTEP+ Winter Retest window for online assessments closes December 11.

PSAT Results Available Friday, December 11

College Board will release results of the fall PSAT/NMSQT assessment by Friday, December 11. [This document](#) outlines interpretation of these scores, with [this shorter parent tutorial](#) also available.

Students in the cohort 2022 may also be interested in [information about the College Board Opportunity Scholarships](#), for taking preparation steps toward college applications.

Guidance on Complying with Assessment Requirements During Virtual Instruction

IDOE has received multiple questions and concerns from schools regarding how to comply with assessment requirements as more schools shift to a virtual instructional model. IDOE acknowledges the burden this has placed upon Indiana schools and will continue to work with state and federal policymakers to identify ways to ensure all Indiana schools and students can participate in valuable assessment administrations in a safe and responsible manner. At this point, no assessment waivers have been granted. To this end, the attached [guidance document](#) seeks to inform schools of their duties during this time and the consequences for failing to administer required assessments.

Text-to-Speech (TTS) Guidance Webinar

IDOE is hosting three webinars to offer more information about the recent guidance regarding TTS.

This webinar is for special education directors, CTCs, administrators, superintendents, and classroom teachers. The dates and times are:

- [December 14](#): 3:30-4:30 p.m. ET
- [December 15](#): 10:00-11:00 a.m. ET
- [December 16](#): 12:00-1:00 p.m. ET

I AM

Registration Available: First Year I AM Test Administrator (TA) Training for New I AM TAs

TAs who have never administered I AM are required to complete the First Year I AM TA Training for New I AM TAs. This would include TAs who completed the training in 2020 but did not administer the assessment due to the cancellation of the window. [Registration](#) for the live training is available via the I AM Portal. This thirty-minute training will take place on March 3, 2021 at 3:30 PM EST. A recording of this webinar will be available via the I AM Portal shortly following the live session. As a reminder, all I AM TAs must also complete the Online I AM TA Certification Course, which is available on the I AM Portal beginning January 25, 2021. Questions regarding registration can be communicated to the Indiana Assessment Help Desk.

I AM Print and Large Print Accommodated Materials Deadline: December 18

Cambium Assessment, Inc. (CAI) will ship print materials based on student accommodations noted in TIDE. Schools must ensure these accommodations are correct no later than Friday, December 18 to ensure shipment by April 5, 2021. As a reminder, only one set of print materials will be shipped per grade per school. Additional print materials can be ordered through the Additional Orders window beginning March 29, 2021, but these materials must be approved by IDOE. Braille materials must be noted in Indiana IEP by January 28, 2021. There are no additional orders for braille forms. Questions about print accommodations can be communicated to Stephanie Thompson at sthompson2@doe.in.gov or 317-234-5601.

Time, Instructional Effectiveness, Engagement, and State and District Support for Inclusive Practice (TIES) Center Shares Information on Inclusive Practices

Did you know that research shows significant positive effects of inclusion for students with significant cognitive disabilities? In a recent study by Gee, Gonzales, and Cooper (2020), researchers recruited 15 matched pairs of students with significant cognitive disabilities (one placed in a self-contained setting and the other in an inclusive setting, matched on 12 total characteristics including age, gender, disability, and communication) and then compared their progress in literacy, numeracy, and communication from the first to the latest student IEPs. **Students who were placed in general**

education for 80% of more of their day demonstrated significantly more progress in all three areas: communication, literacy, and numeracy.

Gee, K., Gonzalez, M., & Cooper, C. (2020). Outcomes of Inclusive Versus Separate Placements: A Matched Pairs Comparison Study. *Research and Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities*, 45(4), 223-240. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1540796920943469>

*Special thanks to TIES Center for granting permission to share this study summary and link. To receive TIES' bi-monthly newsletter, visit their [website](#) and subscribe at the bottom of their homepage.

Ambassador Fellowship Program Now Accepting Applications

The US Department of Education (USED) is seeking outstanding teachers, principals, counselors, psychologists, librarians, and other school-based professionals who interact with students on a daily basis to bring their expertise to serve as [School Ambassador Fellows](#). The program is intended to expand fellows' knowledge of the national dialogue on education and, in turn, facilitate the learning and input of other educators and community members. Applicants may choose to apply as Washington Fellows — a full-time appointment, where fellows are based in residence at the Department's headquarters in Washington, D.C., or as Campus Fellows — a part-time appointment, where fellows collaborate with Department staff while maintaining their regular school responsibilities in their home communities. The [application](#) period closes Jan. 11, 2021, at 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time. Over 130 educators from across the nation have participated in this highly competitive yearlong fellowship experience, and the USED regularly seeks the feedback of those within the Ambassador Alumni Network.

Focus on Inclusion Week

[Focus on Inclusion](#) is going virtual! Administrators and educators have been working endlessly to provide the best for Indiana students. To show our appreciation the Indiana IEP Resource Center is providing a week of professional learning for FREE! Focus on Inclusion Week will take place from February 1 – 5, 2021. Each day, with the exception of Friday, we will offer three sessions. Feel free to join us for all or select the topics and times that work best within your busy schedule. If you are unable to view the live sessions, the recordings will be available to registrants up to two weeks following the event.

Updates from Project SUCCESS

[Project SUCCESS Webinars](#): Project SUCCESS webinars are divided into two options: Webinars 101 - for teachers and administrators who are new to Project SUCCESS or new to working with students with significant cognitive disabilities; and Webinars 102 - for teachers and administrators who have attended Project SUCCESS professional development opportunities and are familiar with working with alternate standards (Content Connectors) to support learning for students with significant cognitive disabilities. PGP's available.

[Paraprofessional Webinars](#): Project SUCCESS presents a webinar series designed especially for paraprofessionals. This series of recorded webinars will help you in your role of supporting teachers and students in the classroom.

[Office of Special Education-WoW Series](#): The Project SUCCESS staff shared about our at-no-cost professional development, tools, templates and webinars at the November 5 Office of Special Education-WoW Series. The recording is now available to [view](#)

Updates from the PASS Project

The **PASS Project**, in conjunction with Indiana State University, is proud to offer two Licensure Programs with cohorts starting in 2021.

In the Deaf/Hard of Hearing Licensure Program and Visual Impairment Licensure Program candidates will receive the training needed to teach students, preschool through grade 12, with diverse backgrounds. Candidates will leave the program with the qualifications needed to apply for licensure in the state of Indiana and the skills needed to help improve the education of deaf and hard of hearing students OR visually impaired students and their families by incorporating best practices for teaching, facilitating identity development, and promoting respect and cultural diversity.

The Deaf/Hard of Hearing Licensure Program includes 20 credit hours which can be completed in two years. The first class begins on January 19, 2021. It will be an online course with one Saturday face-to-face seminar.

The Visual Impairment Licensure Program includes 16 credit hours which can be completed in two years. The first class begins on January 19, 2021. It will be an online course with 2 Weekend face-to-face seminars.

If you want to learn more about the program, please contact [Jenni Mesanovic](#) for all the details.



Contact Us

Questions about specific topics?

[Kristan Sievers-Coffer](#): Senior Special Education Specialist -
Disproportionality (Indicators 4, 9, and 10)

[Sarah Mohr](#): Intensive Intervention Specialist - 1% cap, Indicator 11

[Michelle Oja](#): Special Education Specialist - Transition (Indicators 13 and 14)

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